

INTRODUCTORY

369 morality for the laxity and easy virtue which some Shanghai resi-
166 dents thought would prove a match even for the Peoples' Govern-
ment.*

369 Another element which made life in Shanghai exciting, lawless,
166 and profitable for the foreigners was the periodic flooding of the city
722 by refugees from civil disorder in China. Shanghai was a tiny
455 island of relative security at such times, where the presence of foreign
consuls and troops and the quasi-independent status of the foreign
settlements attracted large numbers of Chinese within its borders.
The first great influx occurred at the time of the Taiping Rebellion
(1850-1864), during which a local uprising of the Triad Society in
1853 and 1854 connected with the Rebellion virtually surrounded
Shanghai, and even penetrated the Settlement until the troops were
expelled by the foreigners. There were about 500 Chinese residents
of the foreign settlements in 1852, 20,000 in 1854, and 500,000 in
1864.⁹ Fortunes were made and lost in real estate and general specu-
lation as the tide of refugees flowed and ebbed in response to the
progress of hostilities in the Yangtze delta. Chinese capital from
the hinterland also gravitated to the protection of the foreign settle-
ments and added more fuel to the speculative blaze.

Legitimate (sic) business of all kinds received a great stimulus upon the
expulsion of the Triads from the city, and a period of feverish and well-
nigh fatal speculation set in. The price of land inside the Settlement and
even without went up to an enormous pitch as thousands of wealthy
Chinese from all sides flocked into the place for the security it offered. . .
Great tracts of land were hastily built over with cheap shanties by the
foreign speculators, who reaped a golden harvest. . .¹⁰

Land within the Settlements which sold for an average of £50 an
● [529] acre in 1852 sold for an average of £10,000 in 1862. In 1862, for the
first time since it had been built, the race course, pride of the Settle-
ment, was idle. The foreigners were too busy to hold the races, and
in the next year the race course was sold for tenement construction
for twenty times its original price.^{† 11}

548 * The *China Monthly Review* records in its issue for January 1952 (p. 96) that at
the time of the Communist take-over in May 1949 there were 800 brothels in Shanghai,
which by November 1951 had been reduced to 71. In the latter month these were
closed, and the 500 inmates sent to a special reorientation and training school, in
accordance with the pattern established earlier in north China.

† Part of the proceeds was used to buy a new tract for a race course farther out

CHILD PROTECTION

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of a foster home programme were available. In this situation it was felt that a stimulation of the practice of adoption would be beneficial, and this policy was embarked upon.

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In every case of adoption arranged or recommended by the Child Protection Service, documents of approval were given to the adoptive parents. These papers were granted only after all preliminary steps (including a medical examination and a subsequent six-month trial period) had been observed. The purpose of this procedure was to formalise adoptive relationships by official approval. It was hoped thereby eventually to create the conception that adoption in accordance with Chinese law should be encouraged.

There are other phases of the care of children which, it was felt, might rightly be termed the concern of the administration even in the peculiar situation in which the Settlement found itself. What is well known as family case work, the effort to assist a family to make adjustments and to solve its problems, was scarcely known in Shanghai, at least in any formal way. Many cases were known where children were delinquent, or begging, the root cause of which lay in the economic situation of the family. Often a child might well have been saved from a future life of crime if the family situation could have been solved. In general, the view was taken that, with the numbers of homeless children as great as they are, children with homes should not be cared for in institutions. Only the children in institutions had the attention of the authorities. The attention of certain social agencies, notably the Pullers' Mutual Aid Association, and some socially minded Chinese leaders, was turned in the direction of family case work as a means of serving the city's needy children.

THERE WAS AN ALMOST complete lack of recreational facilities for even the children of well-to-do parents, a consequence of the congestion in the city. There were some children's parks where younger children went, usually in care of *amahs* as nurses, and to which some more privileged older children also resorted. It was hoped that some beginning might be made with the provision in these of organised play under trained recreation leaders. A revival of a plan formerly instituted by the Joint Committee of Shanghai Women's Organisations could have obtained the use of open spaces

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529 for playgrounds whenever through building demolition or some
741 other chance an area might be temporarily cleared.

The financing of children's institutions in a time of rapidly
262 rising costs proved difficult. Some were stimulated at times to
741 make efforts to improve the diet. "An egg a child a week," "some
oil each day" have been aims which in some instances have been
met, only to find that the cost of eggs has doubled, and that of oil
trebled, so that the former ration again became the rule. There
was felt to be a need for the organisation in Shanghai of a Chil-
dren's Community Chest, when the citizens would be challenged to
give largely and generously to its children, and all organisations
caring for children might benefit. Leadership in the community
to better the situation of its children was not lacking, as the exten-
sive services for homeless children show.

736 THE WORSENING OF the economic situation in the city following
633 the outbreak of Pacific hostilities was followed, inevitably, by the
735 abandonment of many children on the streets by those unable to
748 care for them. Institutions which down through the years had
been able to care for all children whom the police had taken in,
found themselves unable to take more. Their financial situation
with a steeply rising cost of living and the difficulty of obtaining
essential commodities in sufficient quantities precluded the enlarge-
ment of their responsibilities. The Division was therefore faced
with the task of finding temporary care for the abandoned children
and of evolving a general plan to deal with the issue. A camp which
had been established in 1940 by the Salvation Army with the
assistance of the Council to try to rehabilitate street beggars was
used as the temporary place of shelter, and a programme of home
finding with a staff of fifteen social workers was embarked upon.

"Home finding" had two aspects. It sought to trace the natural
homes or the relatives of the abandoned children. By every con-
ceivable device social workers tried to obtain a clue from them
as to their former life. If a child had been lost, the reunion between
the child and the parents if the latter could be traced was often
a touching one. If the child had been abandoned, effort was made
to solve the family problem in some other way, for at all costs
that complete break with its own family must be avoided which
must otherwise mean a lifetime of standing alone. It was not easy